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**GOVERNOR JANET NAPOLITANO PROCLAIMS MARCH 9-16
ARIZONA PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK**
*Arizona Office of Problem Gambling Presents a Unique One-Day Symposium Exploring
Issues Related to Problem Gambling*

PHOENIX – Feb. 25, 2008 – The Arizona Office of Problem Gambling (OPG) announced today that Governor Janet Napolitano has proclaimed Mar. 9-16 Arizona Problem Gambling Awareness Week.

To kick off this week dedicated to educating behavioral therapists and the general public about the effects of problem gambling, the OPG is hosting a unique, day-long workshop focused on individual and community issues associated with problem gambling. The symposium will take place on Mon., March 3, in Phoenix and will feature two internationally recognized experts in the field of problem gambling: Dr. Bo Bernhard and Dr. Lori Rugle.

“Problem gambling is ever-evolving; therefore, it’s imperative that we understand the issue itself as well as other disorders that may lead to or be influenced by problem gambling,” said Rick Pyper, director of the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling. “Governor Napolitano recognizing March 9-16 officially as Arizona Problem Gambling Awareness Week is important to our state as those with expertise in this area strive to educate Arizonans about this public health issue.”

Dr. Lori Rugle will share her insights in meeting the individual treatment needs of problem gamblers with multiple presenting problems. Dr. Rugle is a clinical psychologist who has focused on treatment and research of pathological gambling since 1984. Currently, Dr. Rugle is coordinator of the Gambling Treatment Program at the Louis Stokes Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Brecksville Division; and Clinical Assistant Professor at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry. She is also clinical and research director for Trimeridian, Inc., a company dedicated to the treatment and research of problem and pathological gambling.

Dr. Bo Bernhard will present cutting edge information on the relationship between society's view of problem gambling and the effect this has on the individual experiencing problem gambling behaviors. Dr. Bernhard is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of Gambling Research for the International Gaming Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. A frequent lecturer on the impacts of the gaming industry in communities around the world, he has delivered over four dozen keynote addresses on six continents. In 2002, Dr. Bernhard's research and teaching accomplishments earned him the inaugural Shannon Bybee Award from the Nevada and National Councils on Problem Gambling.

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Arizona Office of Problem Gambling Hosts Symposium March 3
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In addition to these interesting keynote presentations, other symposium sessions will present information on a variety of issues including legal implications of problem gambling and a panel of individuals in recovery sharing their experiences from pathological gambling.

This special workshop on problem gambling is presented by the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling with generous support from co-sponsors The Arizona Lottery and Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino and Hotel Resort. The event is open to the public and especially recommended for professionals and students working in or studying the helping professions.

Emerging Issues: Community and Individual Implications of Problem Gambling will be on Mon., March 3 from 8 am to 4:30 pm at the Black Canyon Conference Center, 9440 N. 25th Ave., Phoenix. The cost is \$75, which includes lunch. Reservations can be made by calling (480) 990-1887. All participants will receive a certificate of completion for six hours of continuing education credits.

About the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling

The Arizona Office of Problem Gambling (OPG) seeks to support a sustainable continuum of services that reduces the impact of problem gambling in Arizona by providing effective prevention, treatment, and education programs throughout Arizona. The OPG is committed to a public health approach to addressing problem gambling issues, taking into consideration the biological, behavioral, economic, cultural, policy, and environmental factors influencing gambling and health. The OPG maintains a 24 hour problem gambling help line-- 1-800-NEXT STEP (1-800-639-8783).

Visit www.problemgambling.az.gov or call 602-266-8299 for more information.

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